

initiatives for African American business owners. In a battle that is still being fought today, Congresswoman Meek passionately opposed cuts to social welfare programs in the 90s to prevent the financial burden from being carried on the backs of the middle class and the disadvantaged.

Mr. Speaker, Congresswoman Meek has been an asset to this country and it is important that we recognize her lasting contributions to her district and our nation. It is always my pleasure to honor an individual with such exemplary character and integrity such as my dear friend Congresswoman Carrie Meek.

INTRODUCING THE FEDERAL EMPLOYEES LEAVE TRANSFER ACT OF 2011

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 22, 2011

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Federal Employees Leave Transfer Act of 2011. Put simply, this bill will permit federal employees to transfer unused sick leave, without compensation, to agency sick leave banks.

I offer this bill during a time when federal employee benefits and service are under attack. Unlike some voices, I believe that public service as a worthwhile endeavor, and that the civil service is a talented workforce that needs to be carefully managed and developed.

Though this bill is a small change to existing law, it is an important one because it reassures federal employees that if they became catastrophically ill, or require extended leave due to the illness of a loved one, other federal employees can come to their assistance through the donation of their excess sick leave.

This bill is expected to be nearly cost-neutral. The bill states that federal employees cannot be compensated for transferring their sick leave to a sick leave bank. That provision is expected to nearly eliminate the cost of the bill, with the small exception of program administration.

Mr. Chairman, as you know, until 2014, Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS) employees will be allowed to use one-half of their accumulated sick leave for annuity purposes. This bill will allow federal employees to donate their excess leave to a sick bank, rather than suffering from the "FERS flu." This bill could even increase productivity by preventing the abuse of sick leave.

Sick leave donation programs and banks are abundant in state and local government, at public and private universities, and in the private sector. Therefore this bill will not grant federal employees a benefit not enjoyed by the private sector.

For those who believe this bill may contribute to abuse, it must be noted that a federal employee cannot draw from a leave bank unless he/she donates to the bank in the first place. That incentivizes participation. Second, a federal employee cannot actually draw from a leave bank until he/she has exhausted all of their own sick and annual leave. Therefore, leave banks are shielded from abuse since federal employees cannot take advantage of this benefit until they have significant skin in the game.

Finally, I am proud that this bill has 4 esteemed public servants as original co-sponsors: Congressmen CONNOLLY, WOLF, SARBANES and VAN HOLLEN. This bill is also supported by the American Federation of Government Employees, the National Treasury Employees Union, the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association, the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, and Federal Managers Association.

RECOGNIZING THE CITY OF LINN ON ITS CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 22, 2011

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the city of Linn, located in Osage County in Missouri, as the community recently celebrated its centennial anniversary.

In what is now the city of Linn settled a diverse group of people with different nationalities and backgrounds. They settled in the region that is currently Osage County, calling the settlement Linnville but then later renamed the town more simply Linn, after the U.S. Senator Lewis F. Linn. It was in 1842 that Linn was designated the County Seat for Osage County.

Here is the home of Linn State Technical College. The college was started with some of the foresight that is indicative of this region, recognizing the need for training a talented workforce. This vision has grown with the community for the last fifty years, putting technical education as an integral part of the community.

Over the past century, a multitude of trades and occupations supported the town. Today, Linn is known for its diverse population, collection of many religious ideologies and exceptional school system. Linn is a thriving town and a proud community, thankful for those that have paved the way to the present and laid the foundation for our tomorrow.

In closing, I ask all my colleagues to join me in wishing the residents of the city of Linn congratulations on their centennial anniversary.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE DEDICATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF AKRON LAKEWOOD HIGHER EDUCATION CENTER

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 22, 2011

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the dedication of The University of Akron Lakewood Higher Education Center. The University of Akron Lakewood will give students throughout Cuyahoga County an opportunity to benefit from the quality education that The University of Akron (UA) has been providing its students for more than one hundred years.

Founded in 1870 by John R. Buchtel, the University of Akron was originally Buchtel College. When Butchel College first opened its doors in 1872, 46 collegiate students were

taught by seven faculty members. Over the past 140 years, UA has expanded and in 2010 welcomed 4,796 freshman students, the largest incoming class in the school's history. Today, the University of Akron offers 300 undergraduate and graduate programs to more than 29,000 students. The Princeton Review listed UA among the "Best in the Midwest" in its 2011 edition of Best Colleges: Region-by-Region.

The University of Akron Lakewood Higher Education Center will be housed in downtown Lakewood's Bailey Building on the corner of Warren Road and Detroit Avenue. The Lakewood location will offer variety of classes for students enrolled in the College of Nursing, College of Education and College of Business. Additionally, general education courses will be offered to high school students who wish to pursue dual-enrollment.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in recognition of the new University of Akron Lakewood Higher Education Center.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 22, 2011

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, due to unforeseen circumstances I was absent on September 21, 2011 for the vote on H.R. 2608, The Continuing Appropriations Act of 2012. However, had I been present I would have voted no for H.R. 2608.

RECOGNIZING THE CITY OF HERMANN ON ITS 175TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 22, 2011

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the city of Hermann, located in Gasconade County in Missouri, as the community recently celebrated its 175th anniversary.

What is now the city of Hermann began as a small colony of the German Settlement Society of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1836. Hermann has remained the county seat of Gasconade County since 1842.

The city was originally laid out by the German Settlement Society of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, with the intent of preserving the German language and culture. In 1847 what is known today as Stone Hill Wine Company was formed. Today the winery hits an annual wine output of 1,250,000 gallons. Hermann became the "Wine City of Missouri," and today is still the center of Missouri's wine industry.

Over the past century, industries involved in the cultivation of grapes, production of wine, shoemaking and tourism have supported the town. Hermann is a thriving town and a proud community known for its many festivals and also as "The Bed and Breakfast Capital of Missouri."

In closing, I ask all my colleagues to join me in wishing the residents of the city of Hermann congratulations on its 175th anniversary.